

MYSTERY TALES

CLASS

MYSTERY TALES

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY

SEPT.
NO.
45

ALL NEW
MYSTERIES!

10¢

"THE MAN IN BLACK"



5-7-9
"THE SECRET OF THE OLD HOUSE"



HE STAYED DOWN TOO LONG"





Ken Grimm
mailing
coupon

In 10 Minutes of **FUN** a day I changed myself

from this
Bloodless, Pitiful
**SKINNY
SHRIMP**
to this

**NEW
MUSCULAR
RED-BLOODED**

HEAD-TO-TOE

HE-MAN!

Ken
GRIMM
AFTER
MAILING
COUPON

Now, Buddy **YOU**

Mail the Coupon
below as I did!

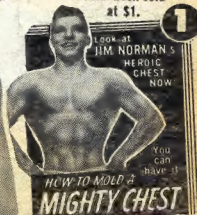
May be LAST
CHANCE be-
fore \$1 price
goes back!

GET ALL THESE
PICTURE
PACKED
COURSES

**5
FREE**

if you mail
coupon NOW!

Millions
have been sold
at \$1.



I just
**GAINED
35 NEW LBS.**
OF SHAPELY POWER-PACKED
MUSCLES!
You can do the same
as I and **THOUSANDS** have
You can add 10 inches to your **CHEST**
6 inches to each **ARM** and
the rest in proportion as I did.

NO! friend you don't have to be **SKINNY, WEAK** or **FLABBY** any more
just mail **NOW** the **FREE** coupon below as I did.
Besides getting **ALL 5** Courses (pictured on this page) **FREE** (MILLIONS
HAVE BEEN SOLD FOR \$1.)
you'll **ALSO** get **FREE** a big **BOOK** of **PHOTOS** of **STRONG MEN**
and **BOYS** who were **WEAKLINGS** like you **BEFORE** mailing coupon.

THIS THRILLING BOOK WILL ALSO TELL YOU

LAST CHANCE-ALL FREE COUPON

1. FIVE COURSES 2. MUSCLE METER
3. PHOTO BOOK of STRONG MEN

Dept. MA-69
Tell Me How To
WIN \$100, etc.

"Joeyett Grimm
greater in
World for
Building
All-around
HE-MAN"
-J.F. Fisher
Physical
Director

JOYEETT INSTITUTE OF PHYSICAL TRAINING
210 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK 1, N.Y.
Dear George: Please mail to me FREE Joeyett's Photo Book of
Strong Men and a Muscle Meter, plus all 5 HE-MAN Building
Courses: 1. How to Build a Mighty Chest, 2. How to Build a
Mighty Arm, 3. How to Build a Mighty Back, 4. How to Build a
Mighty Grip, 5. How to Build Mighty Legs. Now all in one
Volume. When I become a Mighty HE-MAN, ENCLOSED FIND 100
FOR POSTAGE AND HANDLING (NO C.O.D.'S).

NAME _____ AGE _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ ZONE _____ STATE _____

MAIL NOW! SAVES YOU YEARS AND DOLLARS!

HOW YOU

**CAN WIN
A BIG 15" TALL
SILVER CUP
as I just did
and how to
WIN \$100.**



MYSTERY TALES is published monthly by 20th Century Comic Corp. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 655 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK 21, N. Y. SECOND-CLASS MAIL PRIVILEGES AUTHORIZED AT NEW YORK, N. Y. Additional entry at Canton, Ohio. Copyright 1956 by 20th Century Comic Corp., 655 Madison Avenue, New York 21, N. Y. Volume 1, No. 45, September 1956 issue. Arthur Marchand, Circulation Director. Price 10c per copy. Subscription rate \$1.45 for 12 issues including postage. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions appearing in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. Monroe Froehlich, Jr., Business Manager. Printed in the U.S.A.

THERE WAS A GRIM IRONY IN THE STRANGE OCCURENCE, THAT LURTON GAXTON WAS IN NO POSITION TO APPRECIATE! FOR HE, WHO HAD "THOUGHT BIG" ALL HIS LIFE, NOW FOUND HIMSELF TO BE AS TINY AS A CRAWLING ANT!

The MAN IN BLACK!

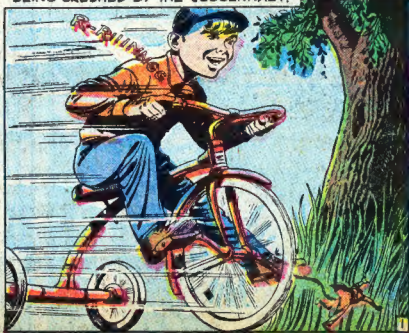


THE SEEMINGLY ENDLESS, PERFECTLY FLAT PLATEAU STRETCHING BEFORE HIM WAS ONLY A NORMAL-WIDTH SIDEWALK! BUT **WHAT** WAS THE STRANGE CLANGING THAT HAD SUDDENLY ASSAILED HIS TINY EARS?

OH (GROAN!) NO!



A DESPERATE SCRAMBLE, AND HE BARELY ESCAPED BEING CRUSHED BY THE JUGGERNAUT!



NOW HE WAS LYING AMONG THE ENORMOUS GRASS BLADES... AND HE WAS TREMBLING...



I'M SO TINY... SO HELPLESS! OF ALL MEN... WHY DID THIS (SOS!) HAVE TO HAPPEN TO ME?

AND NOW HE WAS REMEMBERING WHEN HE HAD LAST BEEN NORMAL-SIZED; HAD IT BEEN A MILLION YEARS AGO, OR ONLY THIS MORNING... WHEN TOM PETERS HAD COME WHINING INTO HIS OFFICE?

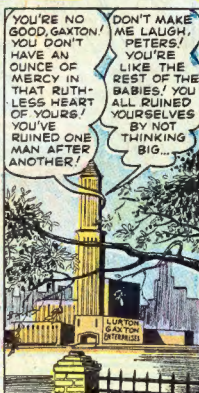


GAXTON... PLEASE, FOR OLD TIME'S SAKE, DON'T DO THIS TO ME!

STOP WHINING, PETERS!



YOU'RE LUCKY I DIDN'T ABSORB YOUR BUSINESS LONG AGO! YOU'RE SMALL-TIME, PETERS... YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT "THINKING BIG" MEANS! I DO... AND THAT'S WHY I'M ON TOP OF THE HEAP!



YOU'RE NO GOOD, GAXTON! YOU DON'T HAVE AN OUNCE OF MERCY IN THAT RUTHLESS HEART OF YOURS! YOU'VE RUINED ONE MAN AFTER ANOTHER!

DON'T MAKE ME LAUGH, PETERS! YOU'RE LIKE THE REST OF THE BABIES! YOU ALL RUINED YOURSELVES BY NOT THINKING BIG...



...BY NEVER EXPANDING! BY STAYING SO SMALL, THAT I COULD BUY UP AS MUCH STOCK AS I NEEDED TO RUIN YOU! NOW GET OUT... I HAVE AN IMPORTANT APPOINTMENT!

TO DO WHAT, GAXTON? TO RUIN SOMEBODY ELSE?

HE HAD WALKED OUT INTO THE FOYER, SMILING SMUGLY, PLEASED WITH HIS OWN HARDNESS; AND AT FIRST HE HAD NOT SEEN THE MAN IN BLACK...



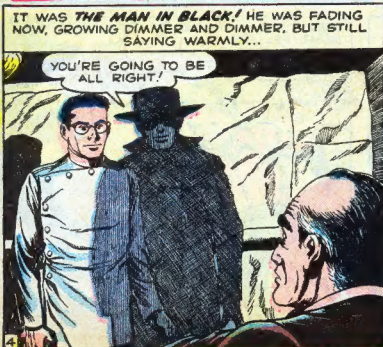
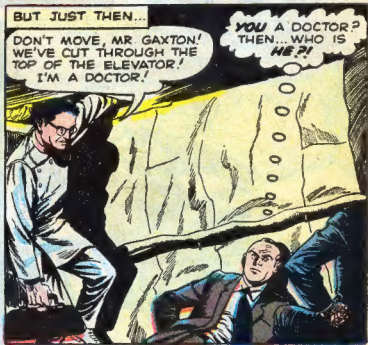
LURTON GAXTON... HEAR MY WORDS!



?!

YOU ARE **WRONG**, LURTON GAXTON! YOU HAVE **NEVER** "THOUGHT BIG"! TO **THINK BIG**... MEANS TO THINK WITH **LOVE** AND **COMPASSION**!





100 AIRPLANES

\$1.25



WOW!

100 Airplanes for only \$1.25. Imagine being the owner of a whole fleet of real plastic airplanes! All kinds... jets, warplanes, transports! Have fun for hours with your friends and family.

**PACKED IN THIS HANGAR
TOY STORAGE BOX**



Rush Coupon

Each set of 100 airplanes comes packed in a sturdy Hangar... After you're through playing with the airplanes, back they go into the hangar for the night.

Josely Co., Dept. AMC
1472 Broadway, New York, N.Y.
Folks:

NO C.O.D.'s

Here's my \$1.25. Rush 100 Airplanes in special hangar. If not 100% delighted my money will be refunded.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

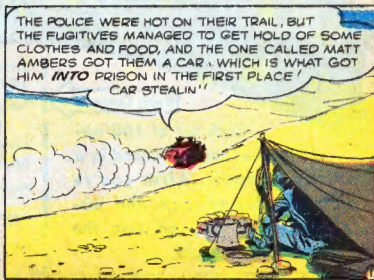
No C.O.D.'s

LEFTY PAID HIS DEBT TO SOCIETY, THEN RETURNED TO SOLVILLE, TO THE ONLY GIRL HE COULD EVER LOVE! BUT THE GIRL WAS GONE, AND SOLVILLE WAS GONE, AND LEFTY WAS LEFT WAITING... ON THE EMPTY DESERT!

SHADOW ON THE SAND!

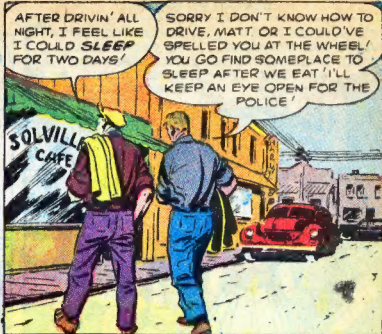
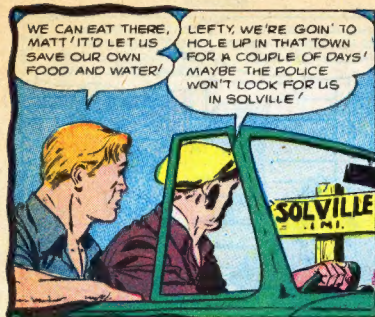


SHERIFF WILLIE COLEMAN GLANCED BACK AT THE SHADOW ON THE DESERT...



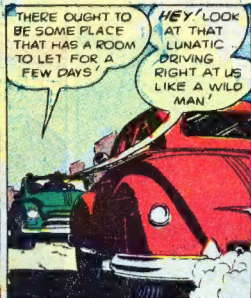
"ALL THE TIME THEY DROVE, THEY KNEW THE LAW WAS RIGHT BEHIND, THOUGH THEY COULDN'T SEE 'EM THERE' NEXT MORNING ..."

"THE SUN BAKED DOWN ON THAT DESERT TOWN 'MOST FOLKS STAYED INDOORS ..."



"THEY ATE A BIG MEAL AT THE SOLVILLE CAFE, BUT THERE WAS SOMETHIN' STRANGE ABOUT IT ALL ..."

"THEY BEGAN TO FEEL BETTER AS SOON AS THEY SATISFIED THEIR THIRST FROM THEIR OWN CANTEENS AND ATE THEIR OWN FOOD ..."

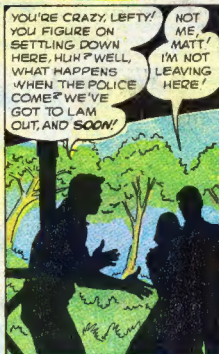


"WELL, MATT SOON FOUND A PLACE WITH A ROOM TO LET, AND LEFTY FOUND JUDITH PAULING ..."



"JIM PAULING RENTED THE ROOM ALL RIGHT, AND MATT AMBERS HIT THE SACK FIRST, JUST TAKIN' TIME TO REMOVE HIS SHOES..."

"IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG FOR LEFTY AND JUDITH TO KNOW HOW THEY FELT ABOUT EACH OTHER! LEFTY KEPT STALLING WHENEVER MATT TALKED ABOUT LEAVIN' SOLVILLE..."



CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE...

**JUNIOR SPACE PILOTS
ON THE BEAM!**

GIVEN! BOYS! GIRLS!
LADIES! MEN!
WE GIVE YOU **CASH** OR **PREMIUMS!**



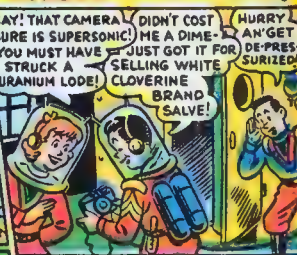
MAIL COUPON

Football, Pocket Watches, etc.



JUMPIN' JUPITER!
YOU'RE SURE
SIZZLING TH' OL' ROCKET
TODAY, TED!

I'M IN A HURRY TO GET
BACK TO OUR EARTH BASE.
PENNY, THE MAIL MAN'S BRING
ING MY NEW CAMERA!



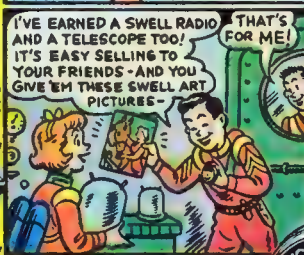
SAY! THAT CAMERA
SURE IS SUPERSONIC!
YOU MUST HAVE
STRUCK A
URANIUM LODE!

DIDN'T COST
ME A DIME-
JUST GOT IT FOR
SELLING WHITE
CLOVERINE
BRAND
SALVE!

HURRY!
AN' GET
DE-PRES-
SURIZED!

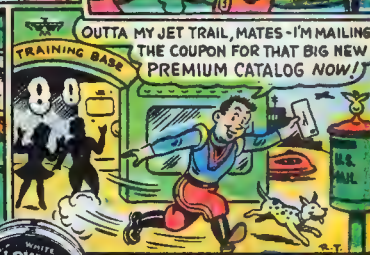
Fishing Outfits
... Flashlight
... 1000 Shot
Daisy Air Rifles

ACT NOW!



I'VE EARNED A SWELL RADIO
AND A TELESCOPE TOO!
IT'S EASY SELLING TO
YOUR FRIENDS - AND YOU
GIVE 'EM THESE SWELL ART
PICTURES -

THAT'S
FOR ME!



OUTTA MY JET TRAIL, MATES - I'M MAILING
THE COUPON FOR THAT BIG NEW
PREMIUM CATALOG NOW!

WE ARE RELIABLE!

Cameras, Corn Poppers, Speedball
Cartoon Sets, Aluminum Ware,
Blankets (sent postage
paid). Mail
coupon for SALVE
and pictures to
start.



ACT NOW

Utelets,
Watches,
Lovable
Dolls.



OUR 62-YEAR

Alarm Clocks,
Pen & Pencil
Sets, etc.
Mail
coupon



ACT NOW

BE FIRST

Radios,
Candid Cameras with carry-
ing cases, Telescopes, Roller
Skates (sent postage paid)
... Mail coupon to start.



LET'S GO!

MAIL COUPON!

GET BIG CATALOG!

Candid Cameras with carrying case,
Telescopes, Watches (sent postage
paid). SIMPLY GIVE pictures with
White CLOVERINE Brand SALVE
easily sold to friends, neigh-
bors, relatives at 35c a box
(with picture). Alarm Clocks, Pen
& Pencil Sets, Bibles, Billfolds, Tele-
scopes, Roller Skates, Blankets, Aluminum Ware

LET'S GO!

LOOK!

Food Chop-
pers, Carving
Sets, Bibles.
Mail coupon.



WE TRUST YOU!

Mail coupon for
SALVE and
pictures to
start!



LET'S GO!

ACT NOW!

Football, Tele-
scopes (sent postage
paid); Boys', Girls' Bi-
cycles (express
chgs. collect).

Boys', Girls' Wrist
Watches,
Baking Sets,
Typewriters,
etc.



Lucie
Dresser
Seth, Cook
Books, etc.

ACT NOW!

OUR 62-YEAR - WE ARE RELIABLE! MAIL

Wilson Chemical Co., Dept MM-148

Tyrene, Pa.

MAIL NOW!

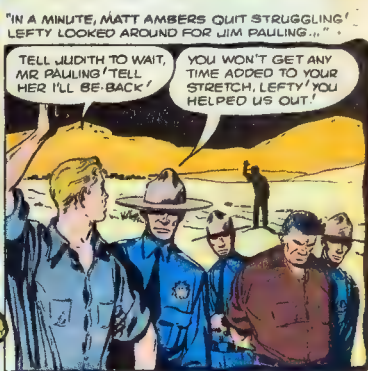
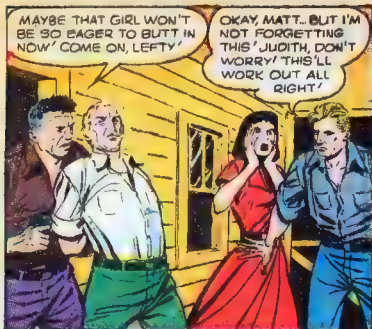
Wilson Chemical Co., Dept MM-148 Tyrene, Pa. Date _____
Gentlemen: Please send me on trial 14 colorful art pic-
tures with 14 boxes of White CLOVERINE Brand SALVE to
sell at 35c a box (with picture). I will remit amount asked
within 30 days, select a Premium or keep Cash Commission
as explained under Premium wanted in Catalog sent
with order, postage paid to start.

NAME _____ AGE _____
ST _____ R D _____ BOX _____
TOWN _____ ZONE NO _____ STATE _____
PRINT LAST NAME HERE _____

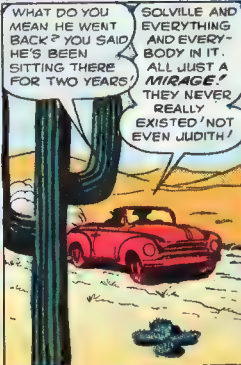
Paste coupon on postal card or mail in envelope today

"MATT CAME OUT OF THE HOUSE A FEW SECONDS LATER, WITH OLD JIM PAULING."

"MATT AMBERS WAS IN SUCH A HURRY TO GET AWAY, HE DIDN'T TAKE TIME TO GET THE CAR. THEY DIDN'T GET FAR, EITHER."



THERE WAS A TWINKLE IN SHERIFF COLMAN'S EYE! HE KNEW HIS DEPUTY WAS WAITING FOR THE IMPORTANT PART OF THE STORY.



MASON HAD TO PROVE THAT HE WAS A BETTER MAN THAN THE STRANGER, AND THE PERFECT PLACE TO DO THAT WAS AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA! BUT...

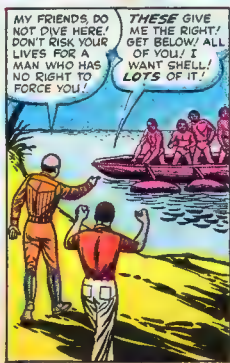
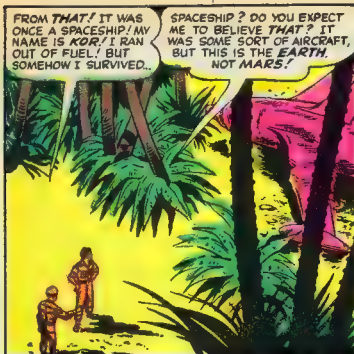
HE STAYED DOWN TOO LONG!



IT CAME FROM THE SKY! A FLAMING SOMETHING THAT STRUCK WITH A CRASH! BUT ON THAT FIRST DAY, WHAT DID MASON HAVE TO FEAR? HE WAS A KING!

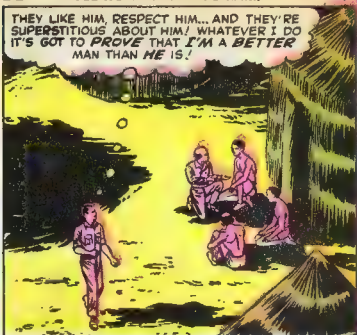
ON THAT FIRST DAY, MASON STILL RULED WITH AN IRON FIST! WHY SHOULD HE FEAR THE GENTLE MAN WHO EMERGED FROM THE SHATTERED PALMS?



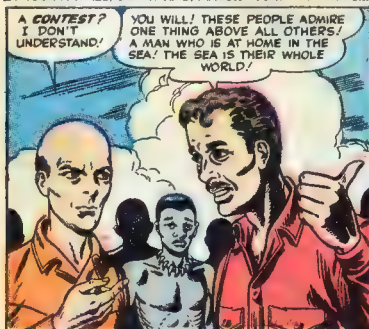




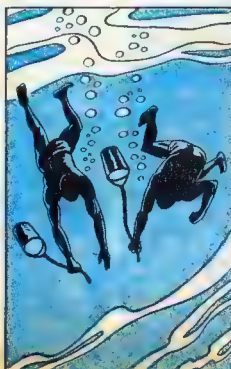
AND YET FOR A TIME, MASON HESITATED! NO, VIOLENCE WAS NOT THE WAY...



IT TOOK A WHILE, BUT IN TIME, MASON FOUND HIS ANSWER...



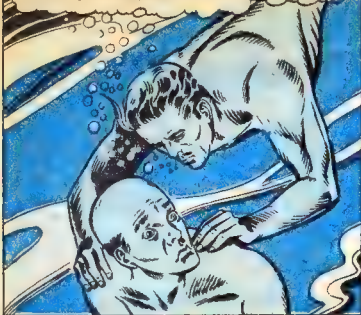
IT WAS SO SIMPLE, REALLY! A FEW MOMENTS UNDER WATER AND IT WOULD BE OVER! MASON WOULD SEE TO THAT...IN HIS OWN WAY.



DOWN HERE, THERE WERE NO EYES TO SEE! AND MASON WAS LIKE A FISH IN THE WATER! THERE WAS NO DANGER HERE FOR HIM!



YOU'RE NOT GOING UP! NOT UNTIL I **BRING** YOU UP! WHEN THEY HAUL YOU OUT HALF DROWNED, WE'LL SEE WHO THEY RESPECT MOST!



ONE MINUTE...TWO...MASON'S LUNGS WERE BURSTING! BUT IT WAS OVER NOW...

THAT DOES IT! HE'S BLACKED OUT! NOW ALL I HAVE TO DO IS TAKE HIM TO THE SURFACE!



HUH?



HE **DIDN'T** BLACK OUT! I CAN'T HOLD ON... GETTING HAZY...



SUDDENLY, THERE WAS BLACKNESS FOR MASON! BLACKNESS...AND THEN LIGHT...

WHAT... WHAT HAPPENED? YOU! YOU KEPT ME DOWN! BUT IT ISN'T POSSIBLE! YOU BREATHE AIR, LIKE I DO! HOW...

HOW? I TOLD YOU, MASON... I AM **NOT** OF YOUR WORLD...

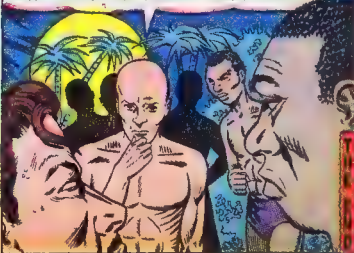


YOU SHOULD HAVE BELIEVED ME! YOU SEE, ON MY PLANET, THERE IS NO LAND! OUR CITIES ARE BUILT ON PILES RISING OUT OF THE SEA...



A PLANET WITHOUT LAND? MASON SHOOK HIS HEAD! IT WAS DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND! BUT HE **COULD** UNDERSTAND THE EYES THAT STARED AT HIM SO COLDLY! HE COULD UNDERSTAND THAT HIS REIGN WAS OVER!

WE BREATHE AIR, YES! BUT NATURE HAS BEEN KIND TO US! WE **ALSO** HAVE GILLS! I SAID THAT THE CONTEST **WASN'T FAIR**, MASON!



Get Rid of UGLY PIMPLES this new easy way!

Amazing new medicated lotion developed by a doctor works wonders by clearing up complexion in one week or less!

DON'T let a bad complexion ruin romance, spoil your fun, cause you to be embarrassed, shy or ashamed. If you suffer from acne, the common external cause of pimples among young people, try this wonderfully effective medicated lotion that was developed by a practicing physician to clear up his own teen ager's complexion after other methods had failed. It has produced astonishing results for many thousands of others. It is **GUARANTEED** to help you or it won't cost you a single cent!

Doesn't Show On Your Face

Keraplex is a skin-colored lotion (NOT a greasy salve or ointment!) that is quickly absorbed by the skin and gets right down in the pores where its healing and antiseptic ingredients can go to work. After you have applied it, there is no trace left on the surface. In fact, it makes a perfect powder base for girls and a refreshing after shaving lotion for men... actually improves the tone of the skin! It is pleasant and easy to use—leaving your skin soft, clean and fragrant.

Boys and girls—if you have pimples on your shoulders or back, you can avoid embarrassment when they are exposed to view. For Keraplex keeps your shoulders, arms, back and chest wonderfully free from pimples—without soiling clothes, without messiness or greasiness!

Works in SIX Out of SEVEN Cases!

An analysis of **RESULTS** taken from actual case histories proves that Keraplex is successful in clearing up six of every seven cases of externally caused blackheads and pimples. It tones up the complexion generally, giving it a healthy, radiant glow.

Try This New Method Without Risking A Penny!

Keraplex is **GUARANTEED** to clear up your skin troubles or there will be **NO COST** to you whatsoever. If yours happens to be the **ONE** extra-stubborn case out of seven which Keraplex cannot help in one short week, it will cost you nothing to have tried it. Keraplex is sent to you with that simple, positive **GUARANTEE!**

SEND NO MONEY

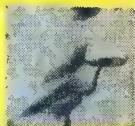
You need send no money with the coupon below. When postman delivers your Keraplex lotion (in plain wrapper marked "Personal"), deposit with him only the modest price indicated below, plus a few cents postage. Then use your Keraplex morning and night for a full week, following the simple directions which will be enclosed.

If you do not **SEE RESULTS** that delight you—if you are not fully convinced that Keraplex **IS** clearing up your complexion—just return the empty bottle or unused portion and the purchase price will be refunded in full. Don't delay a single day. The longer you let your skin troubles go, the more difficult it will be to clear them up and get your complexion back to a healthy clear, unblemished condition! Clip and mail the coupon **TODAY**. Underwood Laboratories, Inc., Stratford, Conn.



BEFORE

Note more than a dozen blemishes on just one side of this girl's face before KERAPLEX was applied.



AFTER

Same girl had used KERAPLEX twice a day for only 3 days when above photo was taken. Note the amazing improvement.



BEFORE

This young man suffered from a severe case of acne for years and tried all the usual "remedies" without success.



AFTER

Same young man after using KERAPLEX twice a day for just one week. Notice the decided improvement—pimples completely gone!

WHAT USERS SAY:

"I was suffering from a severe case of acne and with only 4 days' treatment with Keraplex was completely relieved."—P. S.

"I have been completely satisfied with your lotion to help clear up the pimples on my face."—K. W.

"I have used Keraplex and for the first time in my life my pimples are clearing up in good shape. I can't thank you enough!"—E. S.

MONEY-BACK GUARANTEE

**UNDERWOOD LABORATORIES, Inc., Dept. 87
STRATFORD, CONN.**

Yes! I want to try Keraplex **ON APPROVAL**. Send size checked below in plain wrapper marked "Personal". When it is delivered I will deposit with postman amount indicated below, plus postage. If not delighted with the **RESULTS** I will return empty bottle within seven days for a full refund of the purchase price.

- ☐ Regular Size \$1.98
☐ Double Quantity (Two Bottles) \$3.50

Name

Address

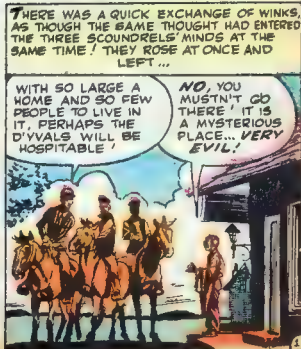
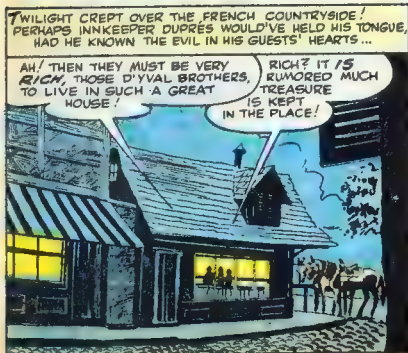
City Zone State

☐ **SAVE POSTAGE.** Check here if you **ENCLOSE** payment, in which case we pay postage. Same money-back Guarantee applies!

Payment must be sent with orders going to A.P.O.'s, Canada and foreign countries, due to postal rules.

ONE COULD HAVE FOUND NO MORE EVIL MEN ALONG THE HIGHWAY TO ROUEN THAN THE THREE WHO ENTERED A STRANGE HOUSE THAT NIGHT MANY YEARS AGO, IN SEARCH OF A TREASURE! NOR COULD ONE HAVE FOUND THREE STRANGER MEN THAN THE D'YVAL BROTHERS, WHO HAD A MYSTERIOUS REASON OF THEIR OWN FOR WANTING TO BE ROBBED!

THE SECRET OF THE OLD HOUSE!



NO SCRUPLES WOULD STAND IN THEIR WAY, ONCE CLAUDE MARIN, EDOUARD NOIR AND HENRI VENOT WERE ON THE SCENT OF GOLD! THEY RODE TO THE D'YVAL HOUSE...

THE FOOLS DON'T EVEN LOCK THEIR DOOR! WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR? GO IN!



IN THIS GREAT CAVE OF A HOUSE WHERE DO WE BEGIN TO LOOK FOR TREASURE?

THAT BIG CHEST... THAT WOULD BE A GOOD PLACE AS ANY TO START LOOKING!

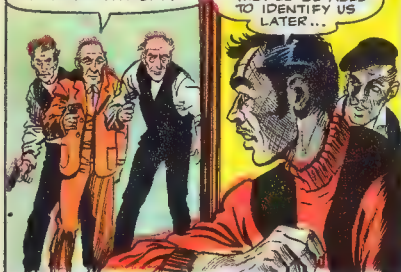


THEY SAY THE BEST PLACE TO HIDE SOMETHING IS RIGHT OUT IN THE OPEN! BUT WE'RE TOO CLEVER TO BE FOOLED BY THAT! LOOK AT THIS HOARD!



THEY WERE TOO BUSY WITH THE TREASURE TO BE AWARE OF THE D'YVAL BROTHERS UNTIL ONE OF THEM SPOKE...

BEHOLD, ANDRÉ, FRANÇOIS... IT IS A LONG TIME SINCE WE'VE HAD VISITORS! WE'D BETTER SILENCE THE OLD MEN OR THEY'LL BE ABLE TO IDENTIFY US LATER...



I WOULD NOT ADVISE YOU TO COME TOO CLOSE! RUN! HE WON'T MISS A SECOND TIME!

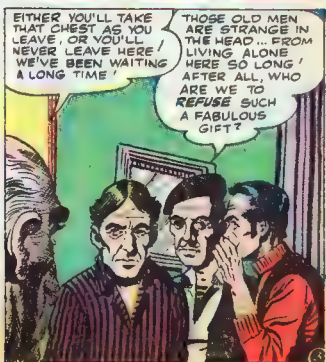
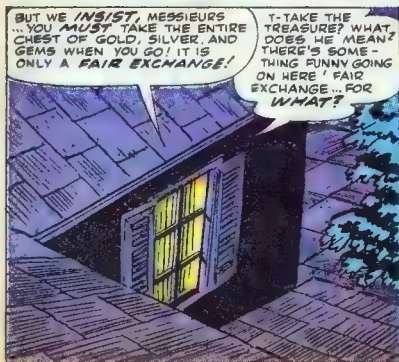
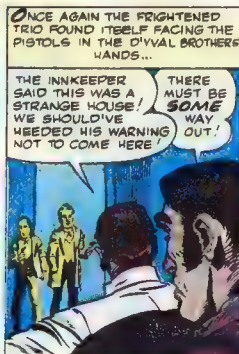
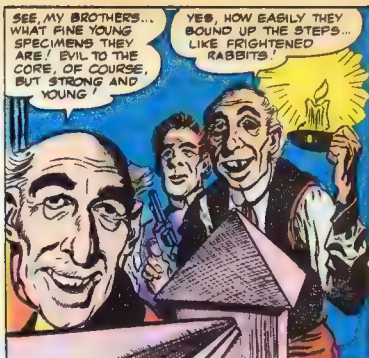


THEY RUSHED INTO A PASSAGEWAY, EAGER NOW ONLY TO REACH THEIR HORSES AND SAFETY...



WE WENT OFF IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION! HOW CAN WE HAVE COME BACK INTO THE SAME ROOM? TO THE FRONT DOOR! HURRY!





ETIENNE D'YVAL HURRIEDLY PRODUCED A WINE BOTTLE FROM A CABINET, AND THREE GLASSES...

ONE MOMENT, BEFORE YOU LEAVE! YOU MUST ACCEPT ONE MORE BIT OF HOSPITALITY!

AHA! THERE'S A CATCH! THE WINE MUST BE DRUGGED!



IF THAT CONCERNS YOU, WE'LL DRINK FROM THE GLASSES FIRST! TO A FAIR EXCHANGE, MY YOUNG GUESTS!

IT'S SAFE TO DRINK FROM THE SAME GLASSES, SO WHY NOT HUMOR THEM?



THEY HAD THEIR DRINK OF WINE FROM THE SAME GLASSES AND HASTILY DEPARTED WITH THE HEAVY CHEST! IT DID NOT CONCERN THEM THAT THEIR HORSES WERE MISSING... NOW THEY HAD WEALTH ENOUGH TO BUY HORSES BY THE HUNDREDS...

LOOK! COMING FROM THE D'YVAL HOUSE, HORSEMEN!



LET THOSE WILD FOOLS PASS! SUDDENLY, I FEEL VERY TIRED... GLAD OF A CHANCE TO PUT THIS CHEST DOWN AND REST!

BUT THOSE HORSES... THEY'RE OURS!



THERE WAS A FAMILIAR RING TO THE VOICE OF ONE OF THE HORSEMEN...

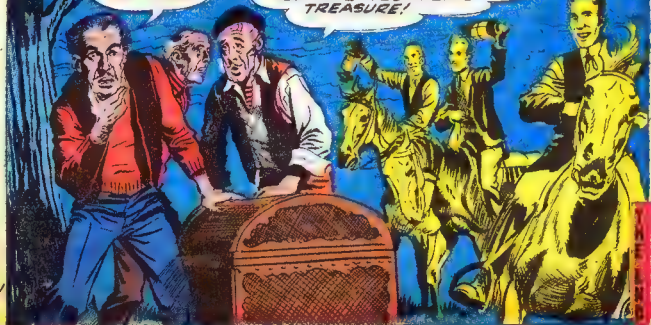
FAIR EXCHANGE!



BY THE LIGHT OF THE HORSE-MEN'S LANTERNS. THE EVIL THREE LOOKED AT THE LAUGHING HORSE-MEN, THEN AT EACH OTHER! AND THEY KNEW WHAT WAS MEANT BY FAIR EXCHANGE!

THAT... (CHOKE!) THAT WINE!

WE'VE EXCHANGED OUR YOUTH (GASP!) FOR THE OLD MEN'S TREASURE!



STRANGE MISSION

IT was obvious that something was wrong. When the lunch whistle blew, Alfred Pook was still sitting at his desk. He made no move to join the fellows. His chin was in his hand, and he had a tragic look on his face.

"What's the matter, Alfred?" asked his friend Harold. "Aren't you coming to lunch today?"

Alfred blinked his eyes mournfully and looked sad as a bassett hound. He opened his mouth and pointed significantly to a wobbly tooth.

"Well, if that's all that's bothering you," said Harold, "why don't you take a trip to the dentist's office?"

Alfred sighed. He guessed it was pretty silly for him to feel this way, but he could think of so many nice things to do. And going to the dentist just wasn't one of them.

"Oh, I'll get around to it soon," he said evasively. "You see I haven't really lived in town long enough to know a good dentist."

"Well, if that's all that's standing in your way," grinned Harold cheerfully, "I'll send you to my dentist. He's been treating our family for years. He uses the very latest equipment and some ultra modern methods. You'll be amazed!"

Alfred gulped. He watched unhappily as Harold wrote down an address on a piece of paper.

"His office is in the back part of the house," said Alfred, "over on Main Street. I'll call Dr. Smith and tell him you'll be right over."

As Alfred left, Harold re-

strained a laugh. But after he was gone, Harold called the other fellows over and told them the story. All of them got quite a kick out of poor Alfred Pook. He was a nice guy, but always so terribly timid.

"I think Alfred should be decorated with a medal of honor for his bravery," said Harold.

The fellows all laughed heartily and shook their heads. They felt sorry for Alfred Pook.

Meanwhile, our hero was proceeding to the dentist's office, rushing fast as a turtle to get there. In fact, if he had gone any slower, he would have been standing still.

Once he got to Main Street, he studied the piece of paper Harold had given him. The last number on the paper was difficult to read. But at that moment, Alfred saw a sign on the corner which said, "Smith's Laboratory." The number on this door was 108. Alfred decided this must be the very number he was looking for, since the first two numbers on his paper were 10. Now that he studied the last digit closely, he decided that it must be an "8" after all.

He entered a narrow hallway and found his way to the back of the house. The door to the only occupied room was closed and from it came a whirring sound that made Alfred think of an airplane in which he would have far preferred to be at this moment. In fact, he politely decided that since Dr. Smith was busy, he had better come back at another time. He

began to tiptoe back to the front door, when a voice cried out after him.

"Hallo there! Why you must be the fellow my friend told me about . . ."

Alfred nodded meekly.

"If you're busy, I can come back another month or so . . ."

"Nonsense, my lad," the man in the white lab coat cried in a booming voice. "Do you realize how long I've waited for this moment!"

Alfred thought that this was a strange thing to say to a patient, but maybe business was bad, he reasoned.

"Well, I've waited a long time, too," he confessed, "in fact, too long."

Smith clutched his hand feelingly.

"Young man, what you are doing is a brave and fearless thing. I want to thank you."

Alfred was about to open his mouth to show Dr. Smith his tooth, but the doctor shoved him into a room that was dim except for the flashing lights surrounding an elevated platform.

It certainly didn't look like the kind of dentist's chair that Alfred remembered, but then it had been so many years since he was in a dentist's office. And he remembered Harold saying that Dr. Smith used nothing but the most modern equipment.

"Strap yourself in," ordered Dr. Smith, pointing to the elevated platform.

Alfred obeyed.

"It's sort of dark in here now," he said. "How will you be able to see what you're doing?"

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT STORY

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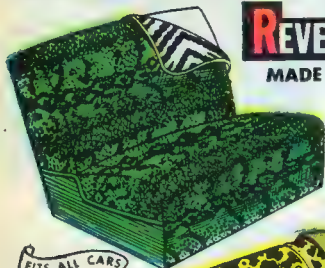
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**RUSH
ORDER TODAY!**

IT WAS SAID THAT THE BURIAL PLACE OF THEIR KINGS
HOARDED A TREASURE OF FABULOUS WEALTH, BUT
NO OUTSIDER HAD EVER SET FOOT THERE... FOR
THIS WAS THE GUARDED...

SECRET OF THE ORAQUIIS!

HOW LONG
WILL THEY
LET US
WATCH?

NOT TOO LONG! ONCE
THE FUNERAL
PROCESSION BEGINS,
THEY'LL MAKE US
LEAVE!



MAYBE WE COULD
BUY THEM OFF! I'VE
GOT A SUPPLY OF
TRADE GOODS IN
MY PACK!

DON'T TALK LIKE
A FOOL, HARRIS!
THE ORAQUIIS
AREN'T TAKEN
IN BY BEADS AND
COLORED CLOTH!



SECONDS LATER, THE WITCH DOCTOR LEAPED
THEIR WAY, HIS STAFF POINTING OFF...

THIS IS IT!
HE'S TELLING US TO
LEAVE! BACK TO OUR
TENT... FAST!





NOT LONG
AFTERWARD
WHEN THE
TWO TRADERS
HAD
RETURNED
TO THEIR
TENT...

WE SURE PICKED A BAD TIME TO GET HERE!
WITH THEIR KING DYING YESTERDAY, OUR
TRIP CAN BE A TOTAL WASTE!

MAYBE NOT,
BARNES...



I'VE HEARD
THE STORIES!
THESE NATIVES
MAKE QUITE
A DEAL OVER
THEIR DEAD
KINGS!

THAT'S RIGHT!
THEY'RE
BURIED IN
A SECRET
TEMPLE...
WITH EVERY-
THING THEY
OWNED.



BUT ANY OUTSIDER WHO
WOULD LAY CLAIM TO THIS
TREASURE WOULD BE THE
WORLD'S BIGGEST FOOL!

MAYBE YOU'LL
EAT THOSE
WORDS, BARNES!



HOLD ON! YOU'RE NOT GOING
OUT THERE! IT WOULD MEAN
MY SKIN, TOO!

LET GO...



I SAID
LET GO!



HARRIS MOVED SWIFTLY AND SOON HE
HAD CAUGHT UP WITH THE FUNERAL
PROCESSION...

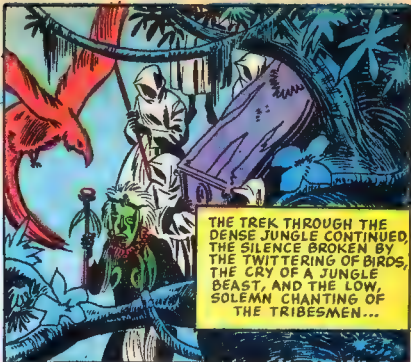
THERE'S ONLY ONE
WAY OF REACHING THAT TREASURE,
AND I'LL HAVE TO TAKE THE
CHANCE!



CAUTIOUSLY HE WAITED, AND
WHEN THE LAST NATIVE PASSED,
HE MADE HIS MOVE...

DONNING HIS VICTIM'S ROBE AND CARRYING HIS SPEAR, HARRIS TOOK HIS PLACE WITH THE OTHERS...

THEY THINK I'M ONE OF THEM! ALL I'VE GOT TO DO NOW IS STAY IN LINE AND THEY'LL LEAD ME RIGHT TO THE SECRET BURIAL PLACE!



THE TREK THROUGH THE DENSE JUNGLE CONTINUED, THE SILENCE BROKEN BY THE TWITTERING OF BIRDS, THE CRY OF A JUNGLE BEAST, AND THE LOW, SOLEMN CHANTING OF THE TRIBESMEN...

SUDDENLY...NOT FAR OFF... THROUGH THE DARK, GREEN MAZE...



IT IS...THE BURIAL TEMPLE OF THE ORAQUIIS KINGS!

HE ENTERED WITH THE OTHERS WHILE THE NATIVES CARRIED THEIR KING TO HIS FINAL RESTING PLACE... AND WHEN THE MOURNERS LEFT...

... AND THE LEGEND SAID NO OUTSIDER WOULD EVER FIND THIS PLACE! WELL, I DID IT ALL RIGHT, ONLY I'LL NEED A TRUCK TO CART ALL OF THIS OFF!



I'VE MEMORIZED EVERY TURN AND TWIST IN THE TRAIL! ONCE I GET TO THE COASTAL AREA, I'LL HIRE A TRUCK! THEN FOR THE RETURN TRIP AND THE BIG HAUL!



SUDDENLY, WITH SMASHING FORCE...





HIS KNEES BUCKLED, AND HE SANK EARTHWARD! ABOVE HIM, THE WIND HOWLED WITH A VENGEANCE...



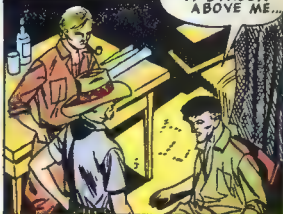
IT'S THE STRANGEST KIND OF THING, BLAKE! MY HEAD BOY FOUND HIM WANDERING AROUND IN THE BUSH! HE WAS IN A BAD WAY, EXHAUSTED... BUT THE THINGS HE KEPT SAYING!



HARRIS MADE NO MOVE WHEN THE TWO MEN ENTERED! IT WAS TEDIOUS TO HEAR THE SAME THING REPEATED OVER AND OVER...

YOU SAY YOU REMEMBER THERE WAS LIGHTNING AND THUNDER, AND YOU KNOW IT IS IMPOSSIBLE IN THE DRY SEASON?

THE LIGHTNING WAS THERE! IT STRUCK ABOVE ME...



WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY **THERE?** WHAT WERE YOU DOING? WHERE WERE YOU HEADING, AND WHAT WERE YOU AFTER?

IT WAS SOMETHING **IMPORTANT**... THAT I DO KNOW...



THE LEGEND HAD SAID THAT NO OUTSIDER WOULD LEARN THEIR SECRET! THE MINUTES TICKED BY... WHEN HE SPOKE HIS VOICE WAS HEAVY WITH FATIGUE...

LIKE I SAID... IT WAS SOMETHING **IMPORTANT!** BUT I CAN'T REMEMBER... **I CAN'T REMEMBER ATHING!**



Dr. Smith laughed.

"Suppose we take the roof off now," he suggested.

Alfred stared wide-eyed as Dr. Smith pressed a button and the roof of the room lifted back to expose the sky.

"Oh, you didn't have to go to all that trouble," he protested uneasily.

Dr. Smith handed him an object.

"This is a communicator so that you can let me know what happens when you're up there."

"Up there?" asked Alfred.

"Oh, you mean when you crank the chair up for the examination."

"Examination!" exclaimed Dr. Smith. "Exactly! That's an odd way of putting it, but you will be the first man to examine it."

Alfred was perplexed at this point. He was about to say, "But you're going to examine me . . ." Yet he didn't get the chance. At the touch of a button, the transparent dome of the platform rolled over him. And before he could say, "Ouch!" Dr. Smith had propelled him skywards.

As Alfred zoomed above the rooftops of the city, he scratched his head thoughtfully. The one bump he had felt when he took off had uprooted the loose tooth painlessly! He held it in his hand and grinned cheerfully.

"I don't know what kind of modern methods you used to accomplish this miracle," he said into the communicator, "but I feel fine."

"Excellent!" Dr. Smith's voice replied. "Now when you land on our new planet, put out the flag in the back of the cabin. Be sure to write your name on the marker, too. It may be my invention that enables us to land on the planet,

but you deserve credit, too, for risking your life."

Alfred was confused. He didn't see how letting a dentist pull your tooth out would be considered so courageous. At least now that it was accomplished!

Take the controls for a landing," Dr. Smith ordered. "Put on the suit next to you and set our flag on the planet."

Alfred put on the suit. He didn't see the point of all this, but Dr. Smith's methods were unusual. And after all, his tooth had come out with so



little trouble! Perhaps the bulky suit was a little joke of Dr. Smith's to get his patients into a good humor before they left the office. Well, if Dr. Smith wanted to play games, the least he could do was go along like a good sport.

Alfred pulled the "stop" lever, put out the flag, then hopped back into his traveling platform. He pushed a button marked "Descent" and in a short time he was swinging downwards. Then, with a snap, he landed back into Dr. Smith's office.

There were now crowds of people clustered here, however. They shouted and smiled at him.

"What a hero! Alfred Pook will go down in history! Dr. Smith was a lucky man to discover that new planet, but without the bravery of a man like Pook, the mission would never have been accomplished!"

For the first time it occurred to Alfred that he was not being complimented for his bravery in the dentist's chair! He gulped as he realized that what had seemed like a game to him was more than that!

By the time he returned to the office, the newspapers and the television sets were blaring about space explorers Smith and Pook! Alfred was a hero!

Anyway, to everyone but Harold.

"My friend, the dentist, waited all afternoon for you to show up," said Harold angrily.

"I don't understand," said Alfred. "I went to 108 Main . . ."

"But he's on 10 S. Main," Harold corrected. "Do you mean to say that stunt you pulled off was all a mistake . . . that you *didn't* volunteer for that space expedition?"

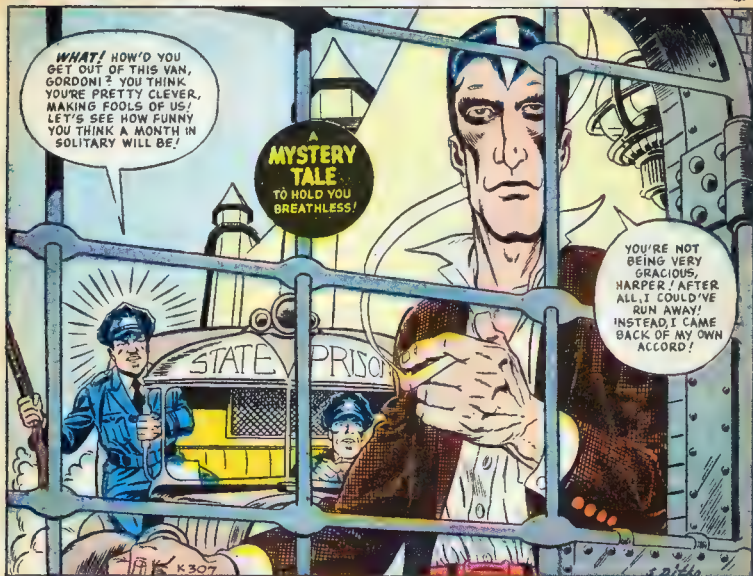
Alfred grinned. Now that he realized how he had performed a courageous feat without knowing it, he was embarrassed. Yet there was one thing he had done which deserved acclaim.

"In a way I *am* a hero," he confessed, "because my main mission was accomplished. Look!"

And with a bold smile of triumph, he showed Harold his missing tooth.

THE BIG CITY POLICE HAD NO WAY TO KEEP THE GREAT GORDONI IN PRISON! MAGICIAN AND ESCAPE ARTIST, NO CELL, NO HANDCUFFS WERE ESCAPE-PROOF TO HIM...UNTIL A SMALL-TOWN SHERIFF CAME UP WITH A FEW TRICKS OF HIS OWN...

NO BARS COULD HOLD HIM!



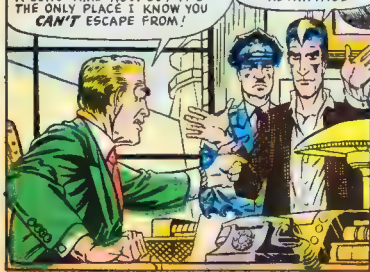
PRISON AUTHORITIES HAD GOOD REASON TO BE ENRAGED WITH THE ELUSIVE MAGICIAN! WARDEN JIM TERRILL WAS HARD PUT TO CONTROL HIS ANGER...

THIS MAKES THE FOURTH TIME YOU'VE BROKEN OUT, GORDONI! WE'VE ABANDONED THE "HOLE" A LONG TIME AGO, BUT IT'S THE ONLY PLACE I KNOW YOU CAN'T ESCAPE FROM!

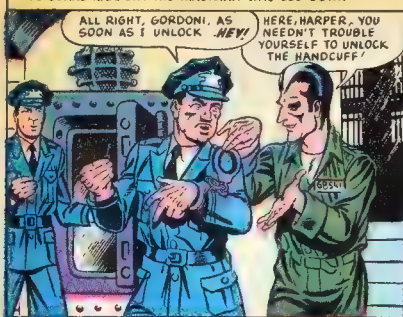
COME NOW, WARDEN...YOU CAN'T BLAME ME FOR USING MY TALENT TO THE BEST ADVANTAGE!

YOU'VE A GREAT TALENT THAT COULD HAVE EARNED YOU A COMFORTABLE LIVING! BUT NO! THERE'S SOMETHING WARPED ABOUT YOUR NATURE, SOMETHING THAT MAKES YOU PREFER CRIME TO DECENCY!

WHY NOT? I'VE NEVER HAD TO FEAR ARREST...NO BARS CAN HOLD ME!



AT THE END OF HIS PATIENCE, WARDEN TERRILL ORDERED GORDONI CONFINED IN THE UNDERGROUND CELL: HANDCUFFED TO GUARD HARPER. THE MAGICIAN WAS LED DOWN



THIS LOOKS AS THOUGH IT MAY BE A TOUGH NUT TO CRACK!



BUT A FEW DAYS LATER, THE "IMPOSSIBLE" HAD HAPPENED!



DURING THOSE WEEKS OF FREEDOM, GORDONI MADE MANY MORE HEADLINES

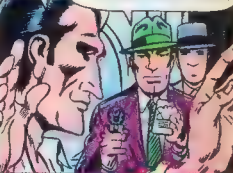
WE KNOW HE PULLED **ONE** BIG JOB: THE PUBLIC AND PRESS ARE BLAMING HIM FOR **EVERY** ROBBERY THAT TAKES PLACE! THEY HAVE THE JITTERS! WE'VE GOT TO FIND GORDONI!



IT WAS A COMBINATION OF GOOD DETECTIVE WORK AND GORDONI'S COCKINESS THAT LED TO HIS QUICK CAPTURE

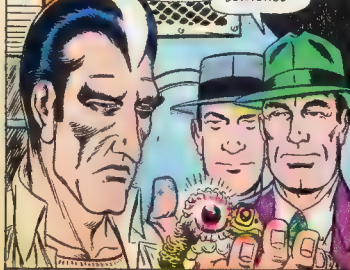
I'VE BEEN A BIT OVERCONFIDENT ABOUT DODGING YOU, GENTLEMEN, BUT THEN, WHAT GOOD WILL IT DO YOU TO TAKE ME IN?

DON'T BE TOO SURE OF YOURSELF, GORDONI! EVERYTHING IS NICELY ARRANGED FOR YOUR RETURN TO THE PENITENTIARY! AND NOW, WILL YOU RETURN THE JEWELS YOU STOLE, OR DO WE HAVE TO TURN THIS PLACE UPSIDE DOWN?



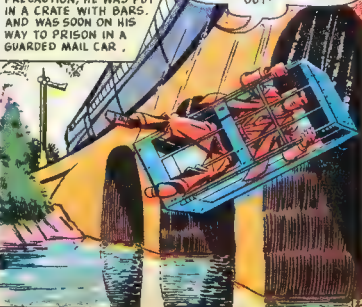
IN SPITE OF WHAT THE NEWSPAPERS SAY, THIS IS ALL I'VE GOTTEN!

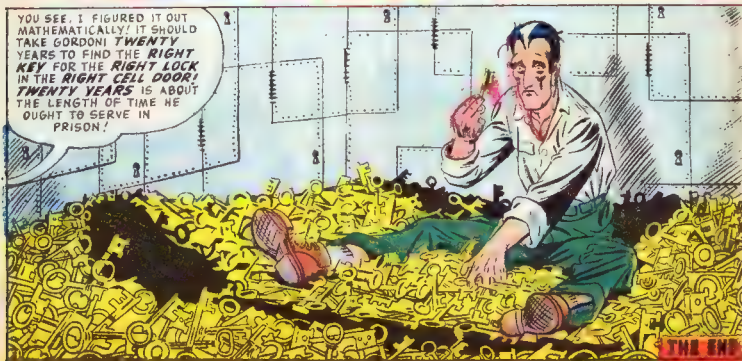
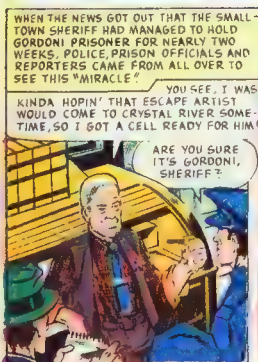
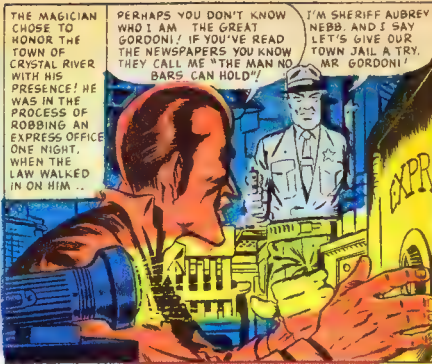
YEAH, WE KNOW THAT, GORDONI! AND FOR ALL THE TIME YOU'VE PUT INTO COMMITTING ROBBERIES, YOU'VE COME OUT BEHIND THE GAME! ALL YOU'LL GET OUT OF THIS IS ANOTHER FIVE YEARS ADDED TO YOUR SENTENCE!



GORDONI WAS SENTENCED TO AN ADDITIONAL FIVE YEARS! AS AN EXTRA PRECAUTION, HE WAS PUT IN A CRATE WITH BARS. AND WAS SOON ON HIS WAY TO PRISON IN A GUARDED MAIL CAR.

GORDONI! DID YOU SEE THAT? HE PUT HIS LEGS THRU THE BARS AND RAN OUT!





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